

## Ask the Trainer:

## Dog Sports; Good for the Mind, Body, and Behaviour



Sometimes I liked to dance to music in the living room, and my dog, not understanding what I was doing, would hump me. This was Galaxy's way of saying she wanted to join in the fun, but she didn't know how. So, I taught Galaxy "middle," where she pops through my legs. She loved this little exercise so much, I decided to investigate more moves we could add, and voila – we have our own little dance routine! This is similar to the dog sport freestyle, which "is a modern dog sport that is a mixture of obedience training, tricks, and dance that allows for creative interaction between dogs and their owners" ([Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog_freestyle)).

I teach agility and dog parkour classes, which Galaxy loves, but she has a particular sparkle when we do our freestyle together. When I dance, she weaves through my legs, moves forward and backward at my hip, and spins. We are sloppy and certainly not ready for our competitive debut, but it's our own fun activity, and humping is no longer in Galaxy's repertoire of moves. It was a fun way to eliminate an annoying behavior.

I've also found that sporting activities have greatly improved my fearful and reactive dog's behaviour and overall demeanour. I often see

## OCTOBER 2022

### THE OFFICIAL SPEAKING OF DOGS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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#### About Speaking of Dogs

Speaking of Dogs Rescue Program is a Canadian registered charity established in the Greater Toronto area (with foster homes across Ontario). Launched in 2001, we are a foster-based, all breed rescue with a focus on senior dogs. We are run solely by volunteers with a mission to help homeless dogs in need by providing shelter or sanctuary, necessary medical care, adoption and education.

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#### Newsletters

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focus, a higher level of confidence, and less reactivity both inside and outside the home. I think this happens for a number of reasons. In sports, your dog can choose whether they want to do things. Sporting activities are for fun so, if your dog isn't into it, then you don't have to do it! Sports also give your dog something new and interesting to focus on, providing excellent mental and physical enrichment outside your normal routine, which is novel and exciting. Humans also really enjoy seeing their dogs accomplish new skills, so the endorphins are flowing on both ends of the leash!

Attending a class is not necessary – most of the dogs I work with wouldn't be able to handle a class! COVID has, however, given us access to many online tutorials, so you can start looking into what sport might make your dog's eyes sparkle – right in the comfort of your own home.

**Here's an overview to get you started:**

### **Dog Agility**

This sport focuses on obstacles and running through a course smoothly and quickly. It includes jumps, tunnels, weave poles, an A-frame, ramps, and more. It requires a lot of equipment, which you can buy online to create your own courses at home or even make yourself if you're handy. The American Kennel Club has a great [article](#) that explains how to create your own home agility activities.

Agility is best for dogs 2 years and up who don't have any physical issues that could be aggravated. If

you are unsure, talk to your vet or a trainer. If you'd like to know more about agility training and competitions in your area, check out your local trainers to see if you can join a class.

### **Dog Parkour**

This is a great activity that you can do anywhere! It's similar to agility, but your obstacles are simply found in your environment rather than a dedicated course, and you teach skills such as two paws up, balance, over, under, through, and more. Learning this sport will change your walks forever! See if your local training centres offer parkour, or you can also learn online by visiting [dogparkour.org](http://dogparkour.org).

### **Freestyle**

This is the fun activity that I mentioned above, and you can be really creative with it! Freestyle is a dance-like sport where you can add simple heeling steps, weaving through legs, and even some fun recall exercises – anything goes, and your dog won't even realize they are learning typical obedience work. WagWalking.com offers a nice [introduction](#) to the sport, including some videos.

### **Sheep Ball**

This is such an awesome game for herding dogs and dogs who like to be a goal tender. The object of the

game is to simulate herding and organizing. The ball stays on the ground, and the dog's role is to be the goalkeeper or organizer. It's different from fetch because there is an end goal to the game, which can be very satisfying for many dogs. And it's a really easy activity – like soccer for dogs! To learn more, go to [learningaboutdogs.com](http://learningaboutdogs.com).

Adding an activity that both you and your dog love to do together is a great way to strengthen your bond, so you get to know your dog on an even deeper level and provide them with even more enrichment – both physically and mentally. It's a win-win situation for you and your dog, helping to encourage behaviours and focus.



**Andrea Dinan**, CPDT-KA, LFDM-T, FFCT. In addition to the certifications above, Andrea is certified through the Karen Pryor Foundations and Kids Around Dogs, and she has also taken the Masters Course in Dog Aggression through AggressiveDog.com. She is the founder of EduCanine and City Dogs Training & Behavior and also created "The Rescue Plan."



# Dogs Looking for Homes

## A friend in need is a friend indeed

Without a doubt, a dog is a real friend. Our dogs come in all shapes and sizes, but they have one thing in common they all need loving forever homes. Open your heart and your home to a rescue dog. You'll be glad you did. For complete information about the adoption process, please visit [www.speakingofdogs.com/adoption-process](http://www.speakingofdogs.com/adoption-process). For more information on each dog, simply click on their name.

Meet our October  
feature dog

# TOBY

Meet Toby, he is an 11-year-old Shar Pei mix who came to the rescue when his owner passed away. He weighs in at around 40 pounds, loves his food, and eats well. He is a sweet, low-key boy. Toby has picked out the dog bed he likes best and, when his foster parents are in the house, that is where he will be. He will move sometimes if he hears anything happening, just to check if it's food-related or something he needs to be involved in. Then, when he sees it's not, he goes back to snoozing. Even though he's allowed on the furniture and beds he hasn't shown any interest.

Toby currently lives with other dogs and is respectful of their space. At mealtimes, when he has finished and others haven't, he doesn't try to take their food. In fact, he doesn't really interact with the other dogs.

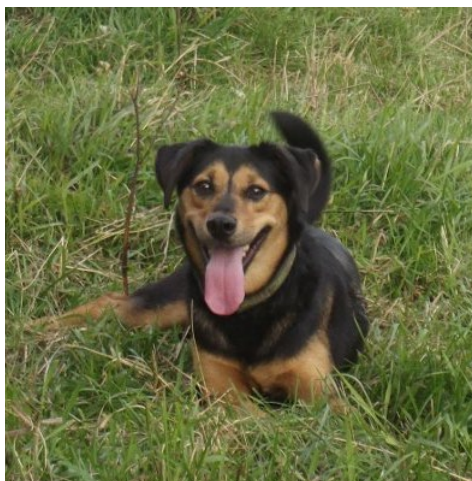


[Click here to visit Toby's Adoption Page](#)

Toby needs to go to a home with a fenced yard. First, he's always had one, second, he really enjoys having one, and third, when he's outside running around his ears switch off, and the hound part of him switches on. Toby hasn't been leash walked much. He pulls a little and doesn't seem bothered by low traffic, but we don't think he would do well in a busy downtown area. He does love walks (foster mom lives in the country) and will have the odd spurt of sprinting before he settles down to just walking and sniffing.

Toby is fully housetrained and will ask to go out with a bark if you don't see him near the door. Also, he will let you know the same way when he's ready to come in again. Toby can be left with the run of the house when you go out and doesn't touch anything he shouldn't. He doesn't seem interested in toys. Toby sits nicely for his food and any treats you would like to offer. He is one sweet, happy, content guy. Could you be his forever home for him to get the love he deserves for the rest of his days?





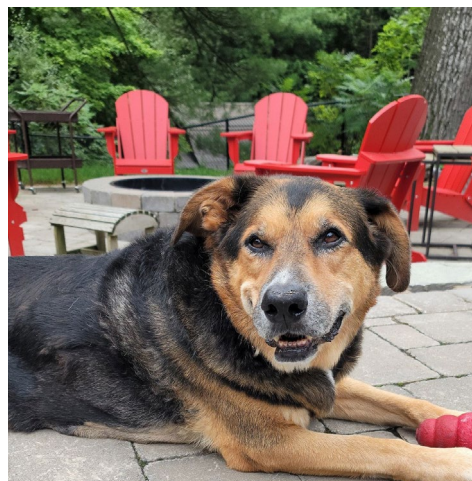
Greta

Hound / Shepherd / Mixed  
Medium Senior Female



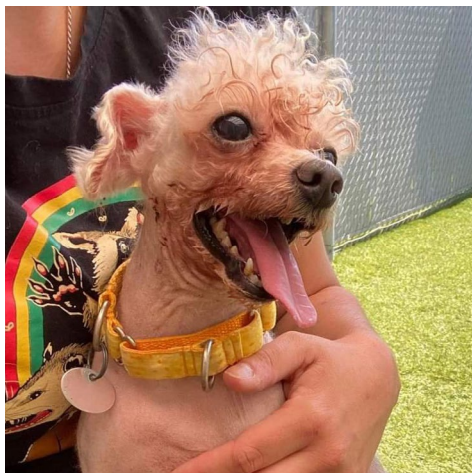
Beau

Shepherd / Collie / Mixed  
Large Baby Male



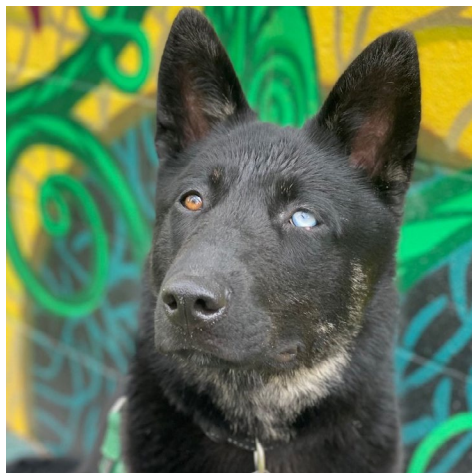
Bones

Shepherd / Mixed  
Large Senior Male



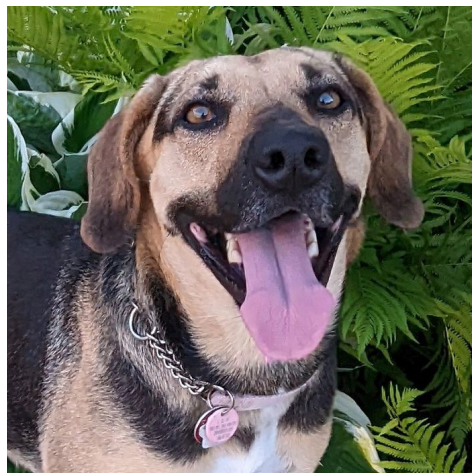
Louis

Poodle (Toy)  
Small Senior Male



Ally

Husky / Labrador Retriever / Mixed  
Large Young Female



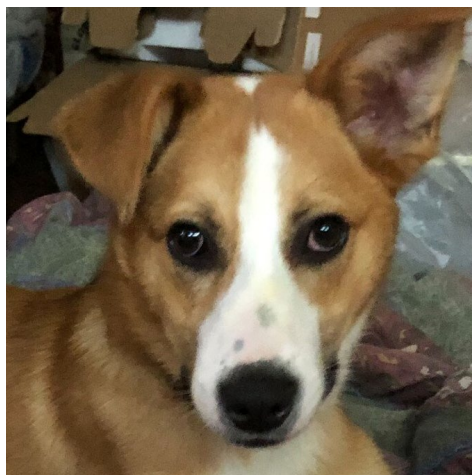
Ginger Snap

Shepherd / Hound / Mixed  
Medium Adult Female



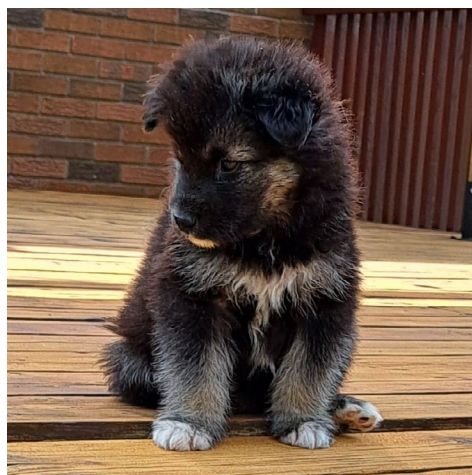
Poncho

Hound / Collie / Mixed  
Large Senior Male



Griffin

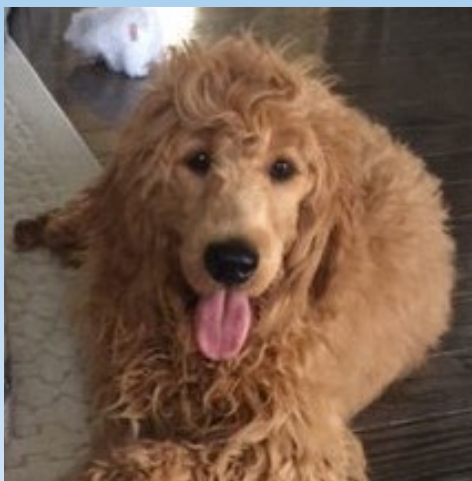
Border Collie / Hound / Mixed  
Medium Young Male



Milo

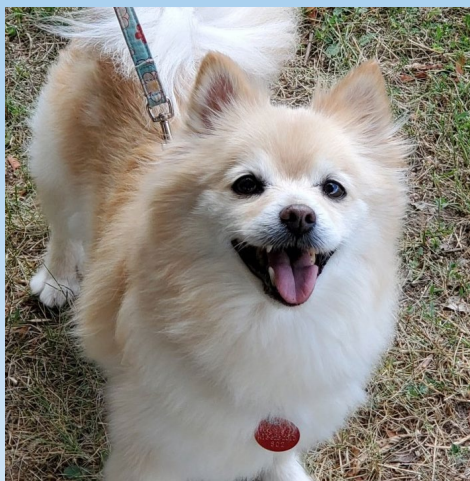
Shepherd / Husky / Mixed  
Large Baby Male





Winnie

Poodle (Standard) / Golden Retriever / Mixed  
Medium Young Female



Crystal

Pomeranian / Mixed  
Small Senior Female



Dont forget to  
**Like and subscribe**  
to our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)  
pages for all of the  
**latest SOD news**

## Hockey Ticket Raffle Scores Big!

BIG wags and wiggles of thanks to all of you who purchased hockey raffle tickets. The money raised is going to help little LUCKY who needs AA Luxation surgery. Congratulations to the winner, who has now been notified.

We also want to thank the donor (who prefers to remain anonymous). He has supported our rescue for almost 20 years and is always there for the dogs when needed!



## LAST CALL FOR CALENDAR ORDERS!

This is your last chance to **order a 2023 Speaking of Dogs Rescue calendar**. The cost is \$15.00 for each one and if you order 10 or more the cost per calendar drops to \$12.00 each. Distribution will be in mid-October, so lots of time for holiday giving. They make the **perfect gift** for any dog lover, and also dandy **stocking stuffers**! If you would like to order any, please email [lorraine@speakingofdogs.com](mailto:lorraine@speakingofdogs.com)



# Adoption Update

*To: Speaking of Dogs Rescue*  
*From: Sandy & Dora*  
*Subject: Calvin*

Dear Speaking of Dogs Rescue,

Dora the Explorer (my pug mix) and I are so, so very happy to have Calvin in our lives. He's eats well, is housetrained, and jumps around like a toy poodle puppy. Izzy, the Shih-Tzu, who we are watching for a week, snuggles up with him on the sofa through the day, and he quite likes her (he likes all dogs, I have come to learn).

What a sweetheart! All my neighbours love him and can't get over how wonderful he is. Thank you so much for choosing to adopt him to Dora and me – it means so much to us, as we were really missing our Beaujolais.



Calvin has helped fill that void. Once Calvin is totally settled and nestled in, I hope I can help you with fostering other little dogs (although I am afraid that I will want to keep them all). I just don't know how you do it - you are far stronger

than I will ever be. Hats off to you, and your team. I'm a 75-year-old wimp, I guess.

Love  
Sandy  
& Dora



## Blackie's Fund

**Thinking of donating to help our foster dogs?**  
**Want to support our Forever in Foster program?**  
**Looking to double the value of your donation?**

There's no better time for your donation to make a difference  
- a **\$10,000 difference!**

**October is Adopt-A-Dog month** and we have been approached by an anonymous donor who has made us an incredible offer - a **DONATION MATCH** pledge. This generous donor will **match every donation** in October marked **BLACKIE'S FUND**, up to \$10,000! In addition to this offer, the rescue is complementing the challenge with a draw. For every October donation marked **BLACKIE'S FUND**, your name will be entered into a draw.

On November 2nd we'll pick a winner who will receive a \$100 prepaid VISA card and one of our 2023 Speaking of Dogs calendars!

Donations can be made at [www.speakingofdogs.com/donate](http://www.speakingofdogs.com/donate) or e-transfers can be sent to: [rescueprogram@speakingofdogs.com](mailto:rescueprogram@speakingofdogs.com)

We are a registered charity so tax receipts are issued to all donors.

Be sure and **reference BLACKIE'S FUND**

**The goal of Blackie's Fund is to:**

- Financially support Speaking of Dogs Rescue to help dogs in vulnerable situations
- Support collaborative efforts amongst reputable dog rescue organizations
- Financially support dogs who require immediate medical attention and intervention
- Support senior dogs who need medical attention and intervention to live in caring homes (this may include providing specialized equipment that enhances the health and wellbeing of dogs, such as special harnesses for walking).



# Happy Tails

## RECENT ADOPTIONS:

A big thank you to our foster parents and our new adoptive guardians for helping give these loving dogs a second chance.



Annabelle



Archie



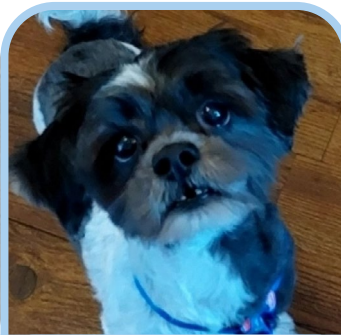
Bernard



Ginger



Lacey



Ruby



Dan



Sky



Veeru

## Thank You!

Thanks so much to everyone who voted us the **Best Animal Rescue** in the **Simcoe County Reader's Choice Awards!**

We are grateful for the ongoing support in Simcoe County! We are run solely by an incredible team of volunteers!



Ola

October is  
**Adopt a Shelter Dog**  
month!



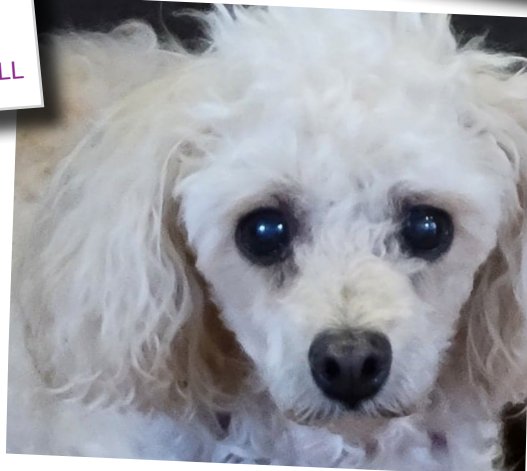
# In Memoriam



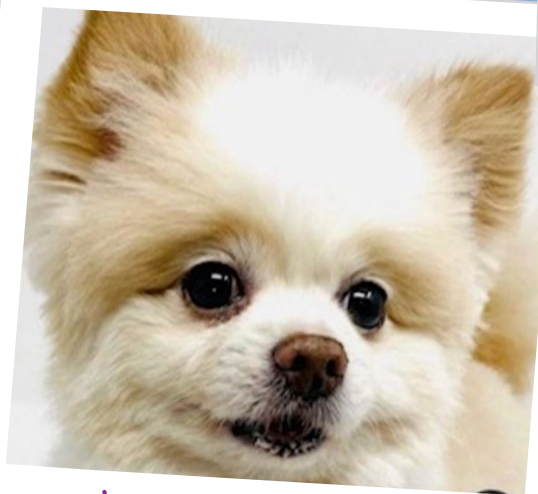
*Chaya* ADOPTED JANUARY 2010  
LOVED BY KARIN AND MARTIN BULL



*Lilly* FOREVER IN FOSTER  
LOVED BY VICKI AND ALL THE STAFF  
AT CEDARBRAE VET CLINIC



*Fawn* FOREVER IN FOSTER  
LOVED BY LORRAINE, IAN, FRIENDS,



*Lola* ADOPTED MARCH 2014  
LOVED BY MICHAEL JAMES



*Rocket* ADOPTED JULY 2020  
LOVED BY MARK, JOAN, AND DONNA